

# Christmas lights scam lands tearful defendant in jail

**Money gone: The woman is the daughter of a former top sheriff's aide; sister also involved**

By Stephen Hunt  
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Handcuffed and crying, the daughter of a now-retired Salt Lake County sheriff's administrator went to jail Monday for stealing thousands of dollars in connection with a Christmas lights scam.

Kristine Mylonakis continued to insist she spent the \$56,000 collected from investors on engineering and marketing to get her Hide-A-Light Corp. off the ground.

Prosecutors claim she spent the money on herself. And because Mylonakis had no checking account, she cannot show where the money went.

"So you just handed people cash?" asked 3rd District Judge Stephen Henriod. "Why didn't you have a checking account?"

"My credit was so bad, I was afraid I couldn't get one," Mylonakis replied.

"I don't believe you," said the judge. "It sounds to me like you just stole a whole bunch of money."

The judge mulled sending her to Utah State Prison, but instead ordered jail and 36 months' probation.

Mylonakis, 43, had pleaded guilty in March to four third-degree felonies, all related to selling securities fraudulently.

In 2002, the defendant incorporated Hide-A-Light, listing herself as president. She told family, friends and people she met in bars that the company made a tubular device containing holiday lights that, when attached to a building, concealed the lights until needed. But an investigation showed there was no product.

Defense attorney Kim Clark said Mylonakis had "a really good business idea but, unfortunately, she is not a business person." Clark said Mylonakis also "got bad advice from someone about raising money."

Assistant Utah Attorney General Charlene Barlow said Mylonakis was not being "totally honest with herself or anyone else. And she sucked other people into it."

Mylonakis persuaded her younger sister, Stacie Lynn Hicks, a Salt Lake County jail officer, to collect more than \$10,000 from jail co-workers. Charged with third-degree felony securities violations, Hicks, 31, entered guilty "pleas in abeyance" to lesser misdemeanors, which can later be dismissed. Following an internal affairs investigation, Hicks was disciplined, including 20 days' suspension.

The women are daughters of former Chief Deputy Don Strong, a top lieutenant of Sheriff Aaron Kennard.

Mylonakis said she never intended to hurt anyone and wants to repay the money at the rate of \$300 per month.

Henriod noted that at that rate, it will take Mylonakis 15 1/2 years to make the victims whole.